

*Below are remarks of Massachusetts Senate candidate Elizabeth Warren's as prepared for delivery at the Democratic National Convention:*

Thank you! I'm Elizabeth Warren, and this is my first Democratic Convention. Never thought I'd run for senate. And I sure never dreamed that I'd get to be the warm-up act for President Bill Clinton--an amazing man, who had the good sense to marry one of the coolest women on the planet. I want to give a special shout out to the Massachusetts delegation. I'm counting on you to help me win and to help President Obama win.

I'm here tonight to talk about hard-working people: people who get up early, stay up late, cook dinner and help out with homework; people who can be counted on to help their kids, their parents, their neighbors, and the lady down the street whose car broke down; people who work their hearts out but are up against a hard truth--the game is rigged against them.

It wasn't always this way. Like a lot of you, I grew up in a family on the ragged edge of the middle class. My daddy sold carpeting and ended up as a maintenance man. After he had a heart attack, my mom worked the phones at Sears so we could hang on to our house. My three brothers all served in the military. One was career. The second worked a good union job in construction. The third started a small business.

Me, I was waiting tables at 13 and married at 19. I graduated from public schools and taught elementary school. I have a wonderful husband, two great children, and three beautiful grandchildren. And I'm grateful, down to my toes, for every opportunity that America gave me. This is a great country. I grew up in an America that invested in its kids and built a strong middle class; that allowed millions of children to rise from poverty and establish secure lives. An America that created Social Security and Medicare so that seniors could live with dignity; an America in which each generation built something solid so that the next generation could build something better.

But for many years now, our middle class has been chipped, squeezed, and hammered. Talk to the construction worker I met from Malden, Massachusetts, who went nine months without finding work. Talk to the head of a manufacturing company in Franklin trying to protect jobs but worried about rising costs. Talk to the student in Worcester who worked hard to finish his college degree, and now he's drowning in debt. Their fight is my fight, and it's Barack Obama's fight too.

People feel like the system is rigged against them. And here's the painful part: they're right. The system is rigged. Look around. Oil companies guzzle down billions in subsidies. Billionaires pay lower tax rates than their secretaries. Wall Street CEOs--the same ones who wrecked our economy and destroyed millions of jobs--still strut around Congress, no shame, demanding favors, and acting like we should thank them.

Anyone here have a problem with that? Well I do. I talk to small business owners all across Massachusetts.

Not one of them--not one--made big bucks from the risky Wall Street bets that brought down our economy. I talk to nurses and programmers, salespeople and firefighters--people who bust their tails every day. Not none of them--not one--stashes their money in the Cayman Islands to avoid paying their fair share of taxes.

These folks don't resent that someone else makes more money. We're Americans. We celebrate success. We just don't want the game to be rigged. We've fought to level the playing field before. About a century ago, when corrosive greed threatened our economy and our way of life, the American people came together under the leadership of Teddy Roosevelt and other progressives, to bring our nation back from the brink.

We started to take children out of factories and put them in schools. We began to give meaning to the words "consumer protection" by making our food and medicine safe. And we gave the little guys a better chance to compete by preventing the big guys from rigging the markets. We turned adversity into progress because that's what we do.

Americans are fighters. We are tough, resourceful and creative. If we have the chance to fight on a level playing field--where everyone pays a fair share and everyone has a real shot--then no one can stop us. President Obama gets it because he's spent his life fighting for the middle class. And now he's fighting to level that playing field--because we know that the economy doesn't grow from the top down, but from the middle class out and the bottom up. That's how we create jobs and reduce the debt.

And Mitt Romney? He wants to give tax cuts to millionaires and billionaires. But for middle-class families who are hanging on by their fingernails? His plans will hammer them with a new tax hike of up to 2,000 dollars. Mitt Romney wants to give billions in breaks to big corporations--but he and Paul Ryan would pulverize financial reform, voucher-ize Medicare, and vaporize Obamacare.

The Republican vision is clear: "I've got mine, the rest of you are on your own." Republicans say they don't believe in government. Sure they do. They believe in government to help themselves and their powerful friends. After all, Mitt Romney's the guy who said corporations are people.

No, Governor Romney, corporations are not people. People have hearts, they have kids, they get jobs, they get sick, they cry, they dance. They live, they love, and they die. And that matters. That matters because we don't run this country for corporations, we run it for people. And that's why we need Barack Obama.

After the financial crisis, President Obama knew that we had to clean up Wall Street. For years, families had been tricked by credit cards, fooled by student loans and cheated on mortgages. I had an idea for a consumer financial protection agency to stop the rip-offs. The big banks sure didn't like it, and they marshaled one of the biggest lobbying forces on earth to destroy the agency before it ever saw the light of day. American families didn't have an army of lobbyists on our side, but what we had was a president—President Obama leading the way. And when the

lobbyists were nclosing in for the kill, Barack Obama squared his shoulders, planted his feet, and stood firm. And that's how we won.

By the way, just a few weeks ago, that little agency caught one of the biggest credit card companies cheating its customers and made it give people back every penny it took, plus millions of dollars in fines. That's what happens when you have a president on the side of the middle class.

President Obama believes in a level playing field. He believes in a country where nobody gets a free ride or a golden parachute. A country where anyone who has a great idea and rolls up their sleeves has a chance to build a business, and anyone who works hard can build some security and raise a family. President Obama believes in a country where billionaires pay their taxes just like their secretaries do, and--I can't believe I have to say this in 2012--a country where women get equal pay for equal work.

He believes in a country where everyone is held accountable. Where no one can steal your purse on Main Street or your pension on Wall Street. President Obama believes in a country where we invest in education, in roads and bridges, in science, and in the future, so we can create new opportunities, so the next kid can make it big, and the kid after that, and the kid after that. That's what president Obama believes. And that's how we build the economy of the future. An economy with more jobs and less debt. We root it in fairness. We grow it with opportunity. And we build it together.

I grew up in the Methodist Church and taught Sunday school. One of my favorite passages of scripture is: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Matthew 25:40. The passage teaches about God in each of us, that we are bound to each other and called to act. Not to sit, not to wait, but to act--all of us together.

Senator Kennedy understood that call. Four years ago, he addressed our convention for the last time. He said, "We have never lost our belief that we are all called to a better country and a newer world." Generation after generation, Americans have answered that call. And now we are called again. We are called to restore opportunity for every American. We are called to give America's working families a fighting chance. We are called to build something solid so the next generation can build something better.

So let me ask you--let me ask you, America: are you ready to answer this call? Are you ready to fight for good jobs and a strong middle class? Are you ready to work for a level playing field? Are you ready to prove to another generation of Americans that we can build a better country and a newer world?

Joe Biden is ready. Barack Obama is ready. I'm ready. You're ready. America's ready. Thank you! And God bless America!